

The Offices of the Messiah.

BEING THE
S U B S T A N C E
O F A
D I S C O U R S E

Delivered in

Haverford-West in South-Wales,

In the YEAR 1753.

By J O H N C E N N I C K.

*Consider the Apostle and High-priest of our Profession,
Christ Jesus, Heb. iii. 1.*

*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost
and with Power, who went about doing Good, and
healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, Acts x.
38.*

*He preached the Kingdom of God, for therefore was
he sent, Luke iv. 43.*

T H E T H I R D E D I T I O N.

D U B L I N Printed :

LONDON, Re-printed; and sold by M. LEWIS, No. 1.
in Paternoster-Row, 1771.





T H E

Offices of the Messiah.

LUKE iv. 18, 19.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he bath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor, he bath sent me to heal the ~~Broken~~ hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and recovering of Sight to the Blind, to set at Liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord.

*** HIS was that Portion of Scripture our
Saviour chose for his Text when he
T preached at *Nazareth* on a certain Sab-
bath-day, not long after his Baptism in
*** *Jordan*; and when he had read it in
the Synagogue he closed the Book and sat down, and
said, "This Day is the Scripture fulfilled in your Ears,"

and all wondered at the gracious Words which he spake, and the Eyes of all in the Synagogue were fastened on him; but before he had done speaking, his own Doctrine was verified in himself, namely "that a Prophet is not without Honour but in his own Country and among his own Kindred;" for they were offended with his Doctrine, and thrust him out of their Synagogue, and attempted to kill him, but he escaped through the midst of them and went away.

I shall not now make Observations on what offended the *Nazareens* in our Lord's Discourse, nor speak of his early Persecutions, and how he used his Divine Power in disappearing from among them that sought to destroy him, for this would take up that Time which I would rather spend in treating of his blessed Offices in the World. This shall always be to me a favourite Subject, as long as I am his Servant, and permitted to labour in his Vineyard.

It is certain, *Isaiah*, out of whose Prophecy Jesus read, spake those Things not of himself but of the Redeemer, since he has appropriated them to himself, and which Things are the Testimony of all the inspired Writers concerning him.

Our Saviour would read in the Scripture, to teach us they were the true Sayings of God, and that we might not be tempted to despise or slight the Law and the Prophets. He often mentions Passages out of the Bible himself, and bid such as wanted to be satisfied concerning him, search the Scriptures, confessing at the same time, "these are they that testify of me." He also blames the *Sadduces*, because they were ignorant of the Scriptures, and urges no greater Reason in his Answers to the Tempter than that it was written. He was, no doubt, the God of Wisdom, and could easily have baffled Satan with the strongest Arguments, but he chose only to say, it is written,
and

and referred to the holy Writings as to the Words of God; nor could th. Enemy with all his Temptations stand against the Simplicity of our Saviour. In this respect he has left us an Example that we should follow his Footsteps, when Satan or carnal Men would reason with us. If they would oppose the Godhead of our Saviour, our Answer must be, How readeſt thou? It is written, "He is over all God blessed for evermore." Or should they despise Free Justification, the Gift of the Spirit, the Knowledge of our Salvation, the Assurance of Faith, Christ's dwelling in us and manifesting himself to us, we must appeal to the Scriptures, for so it is written; and when meek Arguments from the Oracles of God and our Saviour's own Words are not likely to prevail, we may not use other Wisdom, or hope to succeed by any other Weapon; this is the Sword of the Spirit, and "if Men hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the Dead."

Christians are Persons who have received Jesus Christ for their God, and are called by his Name in the World; his Word decides all Controversies with them, and is believed, though it contradicts the Maxims of the Philosophers, and opposes the Sciences of the Schools; and therefore his Disciples, the true Christians in all Ages and Countries, think not, if such Doctrines are propable? or if that Declaration of Jesus, or this Promise can be possible? but simply and implicitly they believe him in all Things, and judge not after the Sight of their Eyes, or after the Hearing of their Ears, but follow his Word through thick and thin, through evil Report and good Report, and venture all they have eternally upon his Word. In this Matter our Saviour proves and tries his Children, for none of his Doctrines are of the World, nor were calculated to please Men. But
some

some point blank oppose the common received Opinions of Men, and are only possible with God; such are the Doctrines of his Divinity, and having the whole Fulness of the Godhead in him bodily, his Incarnation and being born of a Virgin, his Miracles in general, his Death, his Resurrection, his meeting his Disciples, and standing personally and bodily among them, when the Doors were shut for fear of the *Jews*, his Ascension in a Cloud into Heaven, and his making himself known to and dwelling with us.

But though our Saviour's Doctrines do so far surpass natural Conceptions, and transcend all human Reason and Knowledge, yet has he not left his Children without the happiest and most solid Certainty of Truth; for whoever believes his Doctrine shall know if it be of God, and shall have the Witness in himself, the Holy Spirit confirms our Faith and makes our Hearts "rejoice in believing with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory," we anticipate our Heaven here, and have here the Evidence of Things unseen.

It is well, for other Reasons, that we have the Scriptures, for else long ago the Doctrines there taught had been lost in whole Countries, and the heathenish Religion of Nature had usurped the Place, so that if Men enlightened from Heaven should have come and preached, even in such an Age as ours the Forgiveness of Sins through Faith, and the comfortable Doctrine of the Holy Ghost's Inspiration, the Men of this Generation would have been ready to condemn such Preachers, and think, Ye bring strange Things to our Ears; and should they venture to say, "We are Witnesses of these Things," we have got Pardon of our Sins, and have found Jesus and eternal Life, they would be ready to stone them for Blasphemy and Presumption. But now the Scriptures are in the World, the Ambassadors of the Lord may
appeal

appeal to them chearfully, and there prove to all Men, that so the Apostles, and Prophets believed and taught, and so it is written, and this is their spiritual Weapon in the midst of an adulterous and gainsaying People. It is an unspeakable Mercy we have the Scriptures, and I blame such exceedingly who take away that Key of Knowledge from the People. It is a needless Fear that ignorant and unlearned Men and Women would misconstrue it, and begin Sects and create Schisms in the Church; such have not done it, but the Subtile and wise Scholars, the Learned, and such as have atheistically scorned to believe in Jesus, and who have preferred human Wisdom too much, and neglected the teaching of the Holy Spirit; these have made the Breaches, and been the Authors of the dangerous Sects, these have rushed into Ruin and drawn Disciples after them; and therefore only because the Word of God was not their Lanthorn, nor a Light to their Feet, but they chose another Way.

Ye know, my dear Brethren, how many Promises are made to those who keep our Saviour's Words, "they shall not taste of Death, and he will keep them in the Day which shall try all them that dwell upon the Earth;" therefore, and because our Saviour so read and spake out of the Scriptures, let us prize them, and be deaf as the deaf Adder to all Doctrines that glorify not our Lord Christ, and which are not written, nor have the Foundation in the Scriptures of Truth. Let us rest upon their Veracity till Jesus comes, who will not suffer "one Jot or Tittle to pass away till all is fulfilled."

So much seemed needful to say on this Head; I will now proceed to speak of the Text in Order.

It begins, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." All the Children of God have of the Spirit in measure,
but

but Jesus had it without measure, even in his Manhood, of which it is here spoken, the Holy Ghost in Fulness descended and rested upon the Holy Child Jesus, and qualified him for his great Work. In his human Nature he was weak, and weaker than any Man, he being only the Seed of a Woman, and in his Flesh he was capable of suffering, being tempted, grieved, and as liable to all Weaknesses and Hindrances as we are: "He was like us in all Things, Sin only excepted," therefore was he anointed with the Fulness of the Spirit to be the Prophet, King, and Priest of his People. Hence he is called "The Christ, The Messiah, the Lord's Anointed;" for in respect of his humbling himself and taking the Place of Mediator, being a Man, and putting himself in the Place of *Adam*, he was lower than the Father, and indeed a little lower than the Angels, the Minister and Servant of all, whose Office and Service was to restore fallen Mankind, to do God's Work, heal the Breach Sin had made, and set to rights the ruined Creation, washing and saving the Souls in his Blood, and bringing to them Salvation. For this his dear Father spared and sent him, and for this he meekly and willingly came into the World; this the lowly and gracious Lamb confesses when he says, "He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor;" it was the principal End of his Humiliation to let the Poor know that there was Mercy for them. He was made Man and anointed for this Embassy; it was the glorious Errand he had in the World, the chief Message he had to bring from the Throne of his Father and from the sacred Trinity, that the Holy One from on high had beheld their Poverty and sent them Redemption, that they were beloved in Heaven, and that God who made them, and from whom they had wandered and gone astray, had seen their Affliction and

and was come down to deliver them. This was the glad Tidings the Servant of the Lord brought to his perishing World, and for this he, who was God from everlasting and the Creator and Maker of all; when he had contrived the amazing Scheme, and the due Time was commenced, bowed the Heavens and was incarnate, stooped to carry the News himself, as well as to pay the Ransom of his enslaved and captive Creatures, and willingly offered himself to take the Servant's Place, saying, "In the Body that thou hast prepared me, lo! I come to do thy Will O God."

Daniel foresaw who the Messiah should be, and what Person should be the Finisher of Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin, and who should make Reconciliation by being cut off and slain, and bring in everlasting Righteousness, and therefore speaks of anointing the Most Holy.

None of the Angels might announce the Counsel of *Jehovah* in this Matter till the Prince of their Hosts appeared in Flesh, and to the Poor was the Gospel first to be preached. The Poor are the miserable Part of Mankind, the Friendless, the Dejected, the Helpless, such as are apprized of their lost Estate, and who are unhappy, who cannot take up with the World, or be satisfied with their good Things, but who sigh and mourn in secret, who know and feel their Impotency, Sin, and Unworthiness, and who do not know how to be saved out of their Danger; their Thoughts are, "of all Men I am the most miserable." These first and more immediately are the Objects of the Lord's Charity, and though all are poor but insensible of it, yet these are sensible of it, and their Extremity and Poverty has been the Cause of Christ Jesus's coming to help them. They are the highly favoured of the Lord, and must hear how dear they are to him that made them, and what

his Designs are concerning them, namely, to love them with everlasting Love, and to enrich them with the Kingdom of Heaven, and make them Possessors of the World to come. This is easily observed throughout the Scriptures, as well in our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount as in the course of all his Preaching, that the Poor have the Gospel preached to them. And to the poor in Spirit, the spiritually poor, how glad News is this! To such as were in a low Estate, and who were little, and base, and contemptible in their own Eyes, and who were ready to conclude that they were forsaken and justly abandoned by the Lord, and unworthy his Notice or Regard because of their Sin, how sweet must the Gospel sound when it is published before them, that such may be saved, that the Lord has opened a Well of Salvation for such to wash in and be clean, that a Righteousness is prepared and finished to dress and cloath them for the Wedding of the Lamb, and that Jesus had undertook for them, had paid their Ransom-price, and had forgiven their Debt and Disobedience, and was now their Saviour? This must revive their sinking Spirits, and make their heavy and discouraged Hearts rejoice, just as good old *Jacob's* Heart revived when he looked out of his Tent, and saw indeed the Chariots and Waggons *Joseph* had sent out of *Egypt* to fetch him, O, he said, "It is true! *Joseph* is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die;" so when the Report of the Gospel is brought with Power to the Ears, and when Jesus himself speaks to the Heart, and brings it out to see what he has done for Sinners, and how he has prepared a Salvation for them, when he embraces the Soul and kisses it, and his soft till Voice whispers Peace and inspires Faith, though small as a Grain of Mustard-seed, they revive, they receive the welcome Message, and become the happiest

piest of all Creatures. As *Zaccheus*, the chief of the Publicans in *Jericho*, received him joyfully, so do they, and no condemned Criminal who stands ready to be executed with the Halter about his Neck, so rejoices to receive the King's Pardon, no Prisoner is so glad to be released from his Cell, no Slave is so transported to be ransomed, as a poor Sinner to have Jesus preach the Gospel to his Heart, and assure him of his Favour. This is Jesu's Work and Office, this he must do himself, and though he sends out Messengers with the same good News, they are like his Fishermen, when they toiled all Night but took nothing without him. It is his Voice that goes to the Heart; he is the only Preacher of everlasting Life in the strictest Sense, and he was anointed to preach the Gospel to the Poor."

Another of his Offices is to heal the Broken-hearted. The Prophets who saw his Day afar off had called him the Healer, and said, he should rise with Healing under his Wings, and this he preaches himself.

His great Intention is to create the World, the Heavens and Earth anew, to restore the decayed Places, and build up what is fallen down; but especially he has Compassion upon the Broken-hearted, and must heal them, for therefore was he sent. When he came to *Bethany* and saw the Grief and Tears of *Mary* and *Martha*, he was so touched that before all he wept too, and rather than see them bear their cutting Affliction, Jesus called back their Brother and comforted them. Thus he did when, as he was entering into the City of *Nain*, he met the Corpse of a young Man, the only Son of his Mother, who was a Widow, and weeping bitterly for her Child. The Woman was distressed, and her Heart broken with Grief at the Loss of her only Son; her Soul

refused Comfort. I suppose she wished often as *David* once did for *Abfalom*, "Would to God I had died for thee my Son!" She might think, I am a poor disconsolate and desolate Widow, I had but one to comfort me and he is removed, I have none left to care for me or to be a Comforter to me in my old Years. O call my Name *Marah*, for the Lord has dealt bitterly by me, he has taken away all I had, and will bring down my grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave. Thus mourned the childless Mother till she approached the Grave where Jesus met her. O how was his Heart affected; his tender Mercies could not let him suffer it; he ordered the Men that carried the Bier to stand still, and said to the poor Woman, "Weep not;" as if he would have said, O dear Woman I cannot bear thy Grief, I know Sin has been the Cause of all this; there had been no Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Death, had not Sin entered into the World, but I am come down to end it, I am sent to heal the Broken-hearted, weep not, I will restore thee thy Son; and he called him from the Dead, and gave him to his Mother. If our Saviour could be so deeply affected in such Cases, and pitied the over-grieved Children of Men when their Loss was natural, and when only it concerned temporal Things, how much more think ye must he pity Souls whose Grief is intolerable about their Sin, and who are broken-hearted about their future State? He knows what Terrors can oppress a human Creature, he has been a Man, and has experienced it often, and thoroughly in the Wilderness, and that Night especially when he was in such Distress and Anguish that he sunk down and trembled, walked to and fro in the Garden, and sweat Blood being in an Agony, and when he cried out, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" His Pangs and Sorrows cure us, and "by his Stripes we are healed." When he lays his
bleeding

bleeding Hand upon the Heart and says, Peace, be still, all is healed, and the Hurt and Pain removed. Remember this when ye are troubled, and ye who know what a broken and contrite Heart is, for he will not despise it; offer it to him for a Sacrifice and he will help you, and be assured he was sent to heal the Broken-hearted.

Another Part of our Saviour's Office was to preach Deliverance to the Captives. He knew all were sold and carried away Captive by the Enemy; all were his Bond-servants, and properly Slaves to Satan and to Sin. The Bondage in *Egypt* was but a Type of our spiritual Captivity, he therefore came to open the Prison Doors, and to break in Pieces the Fetters of Iron and Brass; but this he would do in Equity and Justice, therefore he became our Ransom-price and was given for us; his own Blood was shed to buy us out of the Enemy's Hand, and by bearing our Sins and Punishments he merited our Freedom. He only has the Power to bring a Soul out of the House of Bondage, and deliver him into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God, and make him free indeed. No Sin can rule any longer when Jesus has made him free; Satan no longer can lead them Captive at his Will when our Saviour has commanded, "Let my People go that they may serve me."

It is a false Doctrine, that we are bound to Sin as long as we live, and must sometimes serve the old Master; this is establishing Iniquity by a Law; but if a Man had been wholly led and captivated by Lust, or Drink, or Passion, or Covetousness, or the World, or by any other Vice, let him apply to the Deliverer and he shall be set at Liberty. Our Lord's Hands that were once bound with Chains and nailed upon the Cross for him, shall unbind him and dissolve his Bonds, though he had made a League with Hell, and a
Covenant

Covenant with Death, it should not stand, let him call upon the Name of the Lord and he shall be saved. He brings the Prisoner out of the Prison-house, and no Sin, no inbred Villainy and Wickedness, no Guilt, no Bonds of Satan can detain a Soul one Moment longer when they believe in Jesus. All lose their Power and become like Tow that has touched the Fire. Before the Word of Christ all the strong Holds of Satan tremble, and every ones Bands are loosed. This every Believer has experienced; they know what Slavery they were once in, how unhappy they were under the Dominion of Sin till the mighty God, who made War with Satan and overcame, preached Deliverance to them, and assured their Hearts he had paid their Ransom, and was now their Redeemer. No one has a Right to free Debtors but the Creditor, and he who pays all for them, nor may any Man deliver the Slaves from the Gallies or Plantations, or Place of Slavery but he that bought them. In this respect therefore has our Lord Jesus the Pre-heminence, for he is Lord of all in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, and can free whom he will. He is the only Creditor, against him only have we sinned, and he only can frankly forgive us and acquit and release us; but this he is more ready to do than we to ask it. It is his Office, his Work, and delight to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and to set them at Liberty. If therefore any are oppressed of the Devil, or find themselves chained and bound by Sin, turn to him as Prisoners of Hope, look to him and be saved.

Another Part of our Saviour's Work was to recover Sight to the Blind. All our Stupidity and Ignorance in Divine Matters is called and esteemed Blindness in the Scripture. The God of this World has blinded all, and with all Propriety may it be said, we were born blind. The blind Person is not more

at a Loss to know what Light is, or to distinguish Colours, than a natural Man is to understand our Saviour and see his Salvation. This is a hard Doctrine to some, and especially to such as are knowing and gifted Men, who have a philosophical Genius, and also to religious Persons who know the Letter of the Law of God, can distinguish between sound and unsound Preaching, have adhered to the best Church, and professed the best and most orthodox System of Faith and Religion, to tell these of their being blind would offend them as much as when our Saviour once told it to the strict *Jews*, who angrily asked him, Are we blind also? Our Saviour answered, "If ye were blind ye should have no Sin, but because ye say, we see, therefore your Sin remaineth. For Judgment I am come into the World, that they whoseee not might see, and those that see might be made blind," that is, Jesus was come to open the Eyes of the Blind, and to enlighten those that had sat in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death, and to remove the Scales from their Eyes, as he did by *St. Paul*, that they might see God and his Salvation. But it is a melancholy Thing when People suppose they know enough, and can see already, and are yet Strangers to our Saviour, and whose Eyes were never anointed with his Eye-salve, neither did they ever come to him to receive their Sight. These are those who love Darkness, and are of the Laodicean Stamp and Spirit, who boasted that they had need of nothing, and knew not that they were poor, and miserable, and blind. Such who proudly stand it out, and will have no other Illumination but Nature, no Light but Reason, receive no Benefit by the Gospel; Christ, the Light of the World, is of no Service to them, they are only the more blind, and all their Wisdom becomes a Curse and

and a Snare to them, and their brightest Counsels are like the Counsel of Achitophel, Foolishness.

I believe all the gracious Acts of our Lord, in respect of his curing so many blind People in the Days of his Flesh, were written not only as a History of his Deeds and Miracles, but that Souls sensible of their Blindness and Darkness might apply to him and be enlightened. Let them then who are spiritually blind tread in the Steps of *Bartimeus*, and others, let them sit in the Way begging, and though they should be persuaded and charged by their prudent Friends, who are afraid of their being righteous over-much, to hold their Peace, and not make so much ado, yet let them cry so much the more, "Lord Jesus! thou Son of *David* have Mercy upon me." See only the astonishing Effect *Bartimeus's* Prayers had upon the Lord, he stood still! he could not proceed on his Journey till he had helped him, he called him to him and asked him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" and he answered, "Lord, that I might receive my Sight; and Jesus said, receive thy Sight, thy Faith has saved thee, and he received his Sight and followed Jesus in the way." If you wish, O that I knew the Road in which Jesus would go, or could be so happy as *Bartimeus*, to know the Place where he would pass by, I would beg like him, and not cease till I had prevailed; then know, as surely as Jesus passed along the Road to *Jericho*, so surely is he present where two or three are met in his Name; go and sit with them, and be assured Jesus passes by: If you cannot see him, he sees you and has Compassion on you. Speak to him and beg of him, as a Beggar intreats for an Alms; let neither Friends nor Foes prevent you to cry to him, till he has said to you, "Receive your Sight, your Faith has made you whole." Thus has our Saviour done to many thousands, and is come into the World on that Errand,

Errand, to preach recovering of Sight to the Blind. He only said in the Beginning of the Creation, "Let there be Light, and there was Light," the same said only to the blind Eyes *Ephatha*, and immediately they saw, let him only speak the Word and you shall no longer walk in Darkness, but have the Light of Life. Many of those who were healed by our Saviour could not relate distinctly how Jesus did the Miracle, and neither did he work the same by all, but spat upon the Ground, and anointed one Man's Eyes, touched another's, and only spake to a third; but this all could say, "One Thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see." So some who have been converted and brought into marvellous Light by the Divine Occulist, and whose blind Eyes his tender Mercy has opened, cannot always relate the direct Manner of his Dealings with them, or tell as others, Step by Step, all his gracious Proceedings with them, but this all can affirm, 'I know I was blind, I know I was in Darkness, and walked in Darkness once, I did not know whether I was going to Heaven or Hell, I was blind to my Part and Interest in the Lamb, I did not see him, I did not look upon him, I was blind but now I see; I see Jesus, I see the Things that make for my Peace, mine Eyes have seen the Lord's Salvation; he has recovered my Sight, and I walk no longer in the Cloud and in Darkness, I know whither I am going, I am a Child of Light and of the Day, the Sun of Righteousness is risen upon me, the Lord himself is my Light and my Salvation, he is my Sun by Day and my Moon by Night, and my Light shall go down no more; God, my own God and Saviour, the Sun that went down in Clouds and Blood upon the Mount *Golgotha*, is my Light, and his Countenance, once covered with Shame and Spittle, is my everlasting Brightness.'

Yet another Office of our Saviour was to set at Liberty them that were bruised. This is to release Souls

buffeted and hurried by Satan, to extricate the Tempted, and such as are continually unsettled and unsafe through the Persecution and Envy of the Serpent. There are some Souls of whom it may be said properly they are bruised; they are sore with Trials, and surrounded with numberless Temptations, but they have a Friend who was tempted in all Points like them, who will preach Deliverance to them, and set them at Liberty, so that the Enemy shall not approach to touch them and to do them Violence no more; these have been like Sheep driven from the Fold and worried up and down in the Wilderness by Beasts of Prey, but Jesus is their Good Shepherd, he says, "I will go after that which is driven away, I will bind up that which is torn, and heal that which is sick, and I will bring them back and feed them in good Pasture." There are some in the World pitiable indeed, sore and bruised above measure, but to none is our Saviour more nigh and tender than to these; he pities them, and will surely lead them safe out of all Temptations, and be their Saviour out of all their Troubles; he will comfort all that mourn, they shall sooner or later find him wipe away the Tears from their Eyes, and leave no Cause to complain or sigh any more for ever. Are ye bruised? tarry the Lord's Leisure, be strong and he shall comfort your Heart, only put you your Trust in the Lord; though you sow in Tears you shall reap in Joy, and though Heaviness may endure for a Night Joy shall come in the Morning; though you pass through the Fire, and go through deep Waters that rage and swell against you, remember who has said, "Ye shall not be burnt, neither shall the Waters swallow you up;" he will say one Day to you, 'Ye are they which have continued with me in my Temptations, I also have appointed you to sit down with me in my Kingdom, come in ye weary and heavy laden Souls, enter the Joy of your Lord!'

There

There is yet another Office of our Saviour to be treated of, and that is, to publish the acceptable Year of the Lord. There is a Day of Grace, and an accepted Time in which God is found, and wherein Salvation is tendered and offered, so long the Door of the Wedding Chamber is open, so long the Trumpet of Jubilee sounds, and it is possible to let this Season of Mercy slip and pass over. This was the Case of the *Israelites* of old, "forty Years long was God grieved with them," and when they always erred in their Hearts and gave no Credence to his Word, after he had said, "To-day if ye will hear my Voice, he sware that they should not enter into his Rest." They were more thoughtful about the Onions and Garlick of *Egypt*, than to get the Vineyards and Olive-yards of *Canaan*; they longed more to go back and get the Flesh-pots and Herbs of the Heathen than the Land flowing with Milk and Honey, wherefore God gave them up to their Lusts and they perished in the Wilderness. Thus now many look after the Pleasures and Vanities of the present Life, and despise the Pleasures at God's Right Hand; they are eager and athirst for the Things of this World, to redeem them from which it has cost the Lord so dearly, and the true Land of *Canaan*, the Glory of all Lands, they slight; all his tender Calls are of little Weight to them, the Price with which they were ransomed and bought is slighted, and they let the Day of Jubilee pass over, and so fall into the sad Estate of *Jerusalem*, over which our Saviour weeping said, "O that thou hadst known in this thy Day the Things that make for thy Peace, but now they are hid from thine Eyes."

On the other Hand, many embrace the gracious Opportunity, and while it is called To-day lay hold on everlasting Life. It is our Saviour who has the Honour

nour to let the Soul hear, "Now is the acceptable Time, now is the Day of Salvation!" O that he would preach it to all here, and give you chearfully and joyfully to betake yourselves now to the Sanctuary and Hiding-place of his Wounds, that when the Night comes, when no Man can work, ye may be safe in the Refuge, and accepted for Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty.

The Day and Year of Grace is now come, the Gospel is now preached, Salvation is now set before you, all Things are ready, let your Hearts also be ready, and enter in by Jesus, so shall ye experience all his tender Mercies and Loving-kindness. Let your Eyes be fastened on him, and your Ears attend to the gracious Words that proceed out of his Mouth, hear all he says, and abide with him; let him be your Friend and Saviour, let him be the Riches of your poor Souls, and preach Deliverance to you in your Captivity, let him open your Eyes and anoint them with his Tears and Blood, it is the best Eye-salve, let him heal your broken Hearts, and comfort you in all afflicting times. Get an Insight into his Wounds and Stripes, learn to prize their Healing, and to them bring every Disease, and Pain, and Grief till you are entered into your Lord's Joy. Sit down at his Feet, like *Mary*, and hearken what he will say concerning you. Attend upon him and he will preach to you, he will be your Minister, and secretly manifest to you his Love and Grace; he will set you at Liberty from all Trials, and find a Way for you to escape in all Temptations, and be your present Help in the Time of Trouble. I have proved him and found him thus to me, and I heartily recommend you to him, that you also may be his Witnesses, and rejoice in your good Minister and Lord who is only worthy to receive Blessing, and Honour, and Glory for ever! Amen!

29 MR 59

F I N I S.